

count postcloture on the motion to proceed to H.R. 3076.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

# RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. CRAMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:24 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 8:43 p.m. when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. SMITH).

## POSTAL SERVICE REFORM ACT OF 2022—Motion to Proceed—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

### UKRAINE

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, this is the fourth time I have come to the floor of the Senate in the past month to talk about the crisis in Ukraine and to talk about what we can do here in the U.S. Congress to try to help the great people of Ukraine.

Today, I come to the floor to express my solidarity with the courageous people of Ukraine, who, as we speak, are under attack in Kyiv and Kharkiv, and in so many other cities and towns throughout Ukraine.

Russia's attack on Ukraine is a brutal, unprovoked invasion of a democracy—an ally and a sovereign nation. It must not be allowed to stand or it will create a precedent that unravels the international order that has kept the peace in Europe for nearly 80 years.

Earlier today, Senator DURBIN and I organized a meeting of the Ukraine Caucus. We are the cochairs. We had Ambassador Markarova come, who is the Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States. Along with her came a member of the Rada, their Parliament, who happened to be in the United States when the attack began. They spoke with emotion about their country, about what they needed—Stinger missiles, Javelin missiles—to be able to fight against superior Russian air power and Russian tanks.

But they also spoke with compassion about the people of Ukraine, about the sacrifice and the courage that they are showing. From the woman who has never fought before who now has an AK-47 and is defending her family in her apartment building to the President of the Republic, President Zelenskyy, all of them are showing courage in defending their homeland, their way of life, and democracy.

I also just left a briefing that was an opportunity to hear from the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and other American officials about what we are doing as a country and to give us an update on their view as to what is happening in Ukraine.

Just as the conversation with Ambassador Markarova and a member of

the Rada was inspiring to hear about the courage and the resilience of the people of Ukraine, the briefing with our American officials was sobering.

It was encouraging to see America stand up to protect freedom; but also, an understanding that the Russian forces outnumber those in Ukraine—and certainly their equipment, technology, their planes, and their tanks, and their ships are going to make this a very, very difficult battle.

Thankfully, the world is rallying on this side of freedom. That is encouraging and inspiring.

I was in Cleveland, OH, last night at a prayer vigil and then a rally. Over 1,000 people showed up. Many were Ukrainian Americans who live in Northeast Ohio—it is a strong community—but many were not. Many were from other countries: Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, people who have family from Romania, Bulgaria, people from the entire region—including some from Russia—but all standing firmly with the people of Ukraine.

As was said last night at the prayer vigil: Tonight, we are all Ukrainians. Tonight, we are all Ukrainians.

There were also demonstrations and rallies all around the country yesterday. We are told over 40 cities had rallies to support Ukraine and the people of Ukraine.

Last night, I heard stories about family members who are in harm's way. Again, people with their voices choked with emotion were talking about what is going on, what they are hearing from their family members back in Ukraine. One guy who I know told me that his brother-in-law back in Ukraine who, again, has never picked up a weapon before in his life, has joined the military. He is probably about my age. He has joined the military to put his life at risk for his country and for his neighbors.

The people of Ukraine did nothing to cause this invasion—nothing. Their only desire is to live in peace. As Ambassador Markarova said this afternoon: Ukrainians never attack anybody. We just want to live in peace. Allow us to determine our own fate, our own destiny.

That is what Vladimir Putin cannot abide, and that is what we in America and the rest of the free world must support Ukrainians in doing, to allow them to have the future that they choose through a duly elected government. The freedoms and democracy and prosperity that we take for granted so often in this country, they relish.

In 2014, at the Maidan, once again they threw off the shackles of a Russian-backed government. They know what it is like to live under the thumb of Russia, under the thumb of the Soviet Union before that. They don't want to go back. In 2014, they made a conscious decision to go forward, looking to the West, to stand with us.

I was there while the Maidan was still smoldering. The tires were still smoldering. People were still there,

gathered. Even though the Russian-backed government had been removed, they still weren't sure what would happen. Then an election occurred, a democratic election. And a President was elected. And a parliament, a Rada, was elected. And they began to fight for not just the freedom of Ukraine and the democracy in Ukraine but the rule of law to get rid of some of the oligarchical structure that Russia had left, the corruption. And now this, after so much progress. Since 2014, they have fought and fought and fought to be like us. And now this.

Hundreds of innocent Ukrainians—men, women, and children—have already lost their lives in this invasion. Nobody knows the exact number. But we saw footage today on CNN, on FOX, on the networks, of apartment buildings that had been attacked by missiles. We heard from the Ambassador that two five-story apartment buildings had been attacked today, and women and children had lost their lives.

This humanitarian crisis, of course, is pouring refugees into other countries as well. Hundreds of thousands of people have escaped to Poland, mostly women and children. Romania is also taking its share of refugees.

But make no mistake: Ukrainians are fighting. They are fighting back bravely. And they have inflicted great costs already on their Russian invaders.

I commend those brave Ukrainians and Armed Forces who picked up arms against these great odds and have already denied President Putin his initial objective and immediate occupation.

I want to particularly commend the brave leadership of Ukraine President Vladimir Zelenskyy. His defiance in the face of evil is what leads free countries and societies through difficult and dark days like Ukraine is experiencing right now. When it was suggested to him that the West would like to help him to find a way to escape, his response this week was: "I need ammunition, not a ride." "I need ammunition, not a ride."

This has been a rallying cry not only for the people of Ukraine but around the world. Unfortunately, Ukraine is used to this Russian aggression. They have suffered already during an 8-year war on Ukraine since 2014, since the Revolution of Dignity, since the events under Maidan I talked about earlier. Fourteen thousand Ukrainian citizens have lost their lives at the hands of Russian snipers, Russian military, and artillery.

I have been to the front. They call it the line of contact. It is the border now between Ukraine and these so-called occupied territories, the Donbas. "Line of contact" is a euphemism. It makes it sound like there are gloves touching at the contact. It is a line of war, and it has been for 14 years. Again, 14,000 Ukrainians have lost their lives.

I had to wear the helmet and the flak jacket because there were snipers that